

Institutional Ergonomics Committee

February 23, 2000

Meeting Minutes

Committee Attendees: Ken Huff, PTLA; Gary Whitney, ESA-FM-ESH; Fran Talley, PA; Faye Miller, BUS-RM; Mike Brandt, ESH-5; Tina Montoya, LC; Larry Wardlow, ESH-2; Mabel Grey-Vigil X-DO; Ernesto Vigil, ESH-5/DX-DO; Carol Smith, BUS-4; Carlos Garcia, E-DO; Lawrence Quintana, APT/TPO; and Cathy Schuch, CST-DO.

Invited Guests: Denny Erickson, ESH-DO and Phill Grogin, ESH-13.

Ergonomics Community: Barbara Garcia, BUS-4; Sylvia Herrera, BUS-RM; Roberta Cocking, ESH-13; and Barbara Hargis, ESH-5.

Announcements

- Carol Smith reminded Committee members to identify an alternate committee member. Please send the appropriate information about the alternate to Mike Brandt.
- Carol and Mike met with Ellen Castille, LC/HR, to discuss the Committee charter and HEERA requirements. Ellen indicated that Mike should be an Ex Officio member of the Committee. A team from HR and legal council is currently reviewing the charter of each institutional safety committee. After we receive any additional changes, we will incorporate them and distribute the revised charter to the Committee for review and comment.
- **Denny Erickson Comments**

Denny discussed topics ranging from ISM and operational excellence to illness and injury trends for the Laboratory. A summary of his comments are as follows:

- It is important to the Laboratory to achieve operational excellence cost effectively.
- ISM is working within Laboratory organizations and operations.
- The Ergonomics Committee is now recognized as one of the Laboratory's Institutional Safety Committees.
- The Laboratory has reduced our injury and illness rates for the past three years. However, future reductions to these rates will be more difficult.
- Repetitive trauma illnesses must be given greater attention to address the subtleties to employee behaviors and to the value systems of people and organizations.

- A different approach is needed to achieve future reductions in injury and illness rates. This approach should be proactive, focus on communication and awareness, and collect input from the various professionals involved.
- The Ergonomics Committee needs to provide input to reduce repetitive trauma in ways that are acceptable to the Lab's culture.
- The Committee should develop an ergonomics awareness campaign.

Denny answered various questions from the attendees. Some of those questions and answers are as follows:

- Carol Smith asked: "How far beyond the proposed OSHA rule for ergonomics do you want the Lab to go, considering cost constraints?"

Denny Erickson's Response:

- Focus on achieving results---reductions in injuries and illnesses.
- Balance costs and benefits.
- Use a pragmatic approach and commonsense in implementing the ergonomics program.
- OSHA's proposed rule should be used as a baseline of program requirements.

- Fran Talley asked: "Where would you like to see the Committee place its emphasis?"

Denny Erickson's Response:

- A general ergonomics awareness campaign should be considered to elevate the general knowledge of all employees about ergonomic risks, hazards, and available control measures.

- Carlos Garcia made a general comment about out-of-the-box thinking and creativity related to injury and illness reduction.

Denny Erickson's Response:

- He agreed and stated that in order for the Committee to have an impact on ergonomic injuries and illnesses, Committee members must be willing to invest and commit time to the Committee's work.

- Carol Smith then discussed focusing the Committee's work on the training component of the Ergonomics LIR (Section 7.5). As a result, the Committee invited Phill Grogin, ESH-13, to deliver office ergonomics training at the next Committee meeting on March 6, 2000, from 10 a.m. to Noon at the CST-DO Conference Room, Building 29, TA-48.